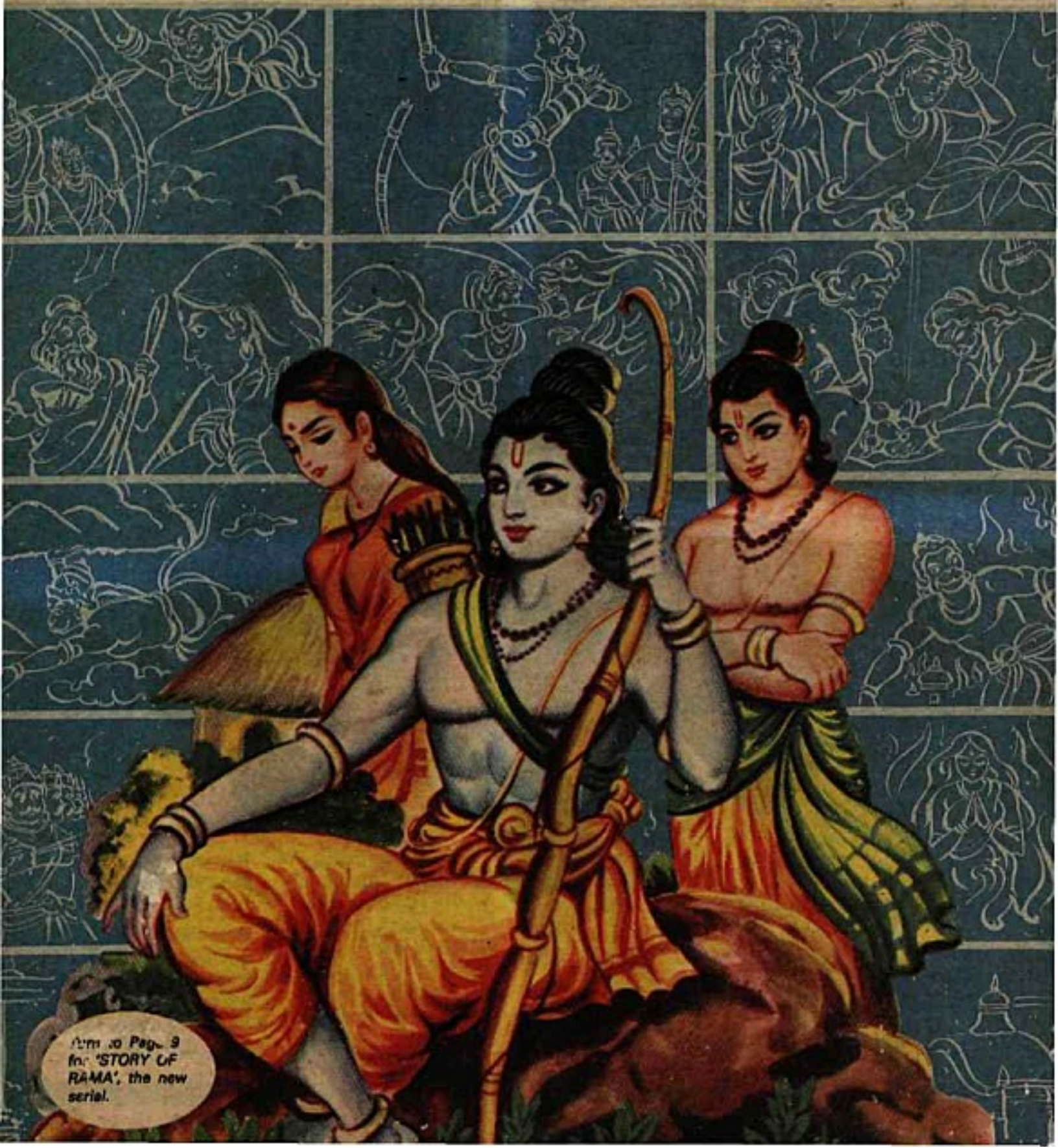


CHANDAMAMA

OCTOBER 1985

Rs. 2.00



Turn to Page 9
for 'STORY OF
RAMA', the new
serial.

**"Porky the Pig's great fun to make
Bits 'n' pieces with Fevicol
That's all it takes"**

— Fevi Fairy



It's a neat trick
And it's quick
All you do is think
and stick
Stick what?
Anything at all
Just have a ball
Make a pencil stand,
a basket
... even a doll

It's not messy at all
How can that be?
With Fevicol.

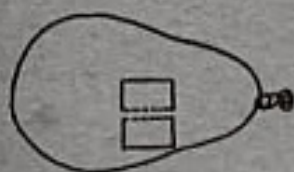
With Fevicol MR you
could go on and on...
and whatever you make,
will last and last
Because Fevicol MR
really sticks to its job.

You will need:

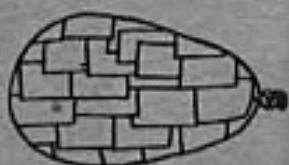
1. One balloon (medium size)
2. A few sheets of newspaper
3. Velvet paper in the following colours: pink, black, blue and yellow
4. White chart paper
5. Pink thread
6. Fevicol MR Adhesive



1. Inflate balloon to $\frac{3}{4}$ th capacity so that it remains soft. Tie tightly with thread so that no air escapes. This elongated tied end makes the tail.



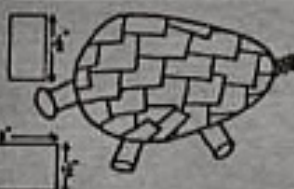
Cut newspaper into 1" x 1" square pieces. Soak in water for 10-15 minutes. Place pieces one by one on balloon. Each piece should slightly overlap the other. Cover the whole balloon surface. Put 3 layers of newspaper in a similar manner.



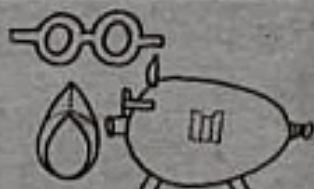
3. Now take 1" x 1" square pieces of newspaper and apply Fevicol MR Adhesive on each of them. Stick them on the balloon. Put 4 such layers in a similar manner. Let it stay for 8-10 hours.



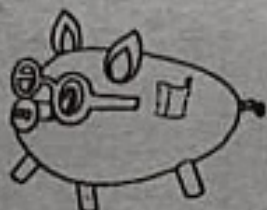
4. When balloon is dry and hard, prick with a pin to burst balloon. Just the shell of newspaper will remain. Decorate with a final layer of 1" x 1" square pieces of pink velvet paper using Fevicol MR Adhesive.



Take 5 chart paper pieces of size $1\frac{1}{2}$ " x 3". From them make 5 cylinders $1\frac{1}{2}$ " each in height. Stick black velvet paper on them. Stick 4 of them to the balloon to make the legs. Stick one of them to make the nose. On nose, stick a circle of chart paper covered with black velvet paper.



6. Make spectacles and ears from chart paper. Stick black velvet paper on ears and blue velvet paper on spectacles. Stick them in place. Make eyes from yellow velvet paper and eyeballs from black velvet paper.



7. Take two 1" x $1\frac{1}{2}$ " pieces of chart paper and stick pink velvet paper on them. Stick these on either side of piggy's body to form pockets for pens.

k! Oink! Porky the Pig is ready.
will keep your pens safely now.



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Synthetic Adhesive

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NEXT ISSUE

- **A SAGE OUT OF AN ANT-HILL!**
Second part of the Prelude to the Story of Rama and the legend of the birth of poetry.
- **ALAMBUSA:** *The nymph who was born as a Princess—in Characters from Indian Classics.*
- **TEMPLE OF KONARK:** *Unforgettable legend behind the great Shrine to the Sun—through pictures.*
- *A bunch of interesting stories, legends, humour, The Nature's Kingdom, the serial picture-story, Towards Better English, Newsflash, Let us Know, Do You Know? and more!*

Thoughts to be Treasured
Light is good in whatever lamp it may burn, even as a rose is beautiful in whatever garden it may bloom.

—S. Radhakrishnan

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CHANDAMAMA

Controlling Editor: NAGI REDDI
Founder: CHAKRAPANI

HOMAGE TO THE MOTHER



In the month of October the country will celebrate the Dussehra and the Navarathri—all invoking the Divine Mother. The manner of the celebration will differ from region to region, but its two-fold spirit will be the same, to seek the Grace of the Divine Mother and to rejoice at the victory of the good over the evil.

Just as we all owe our origin to our mothers, the ancient Indians traced the whole creation to the Divine Mother. For them the earth was a form of the Divine Mother—Bhumidevi, the country was a form of the Mother too—Bharat Janani. This was a great vision and today it assumes even greater importance. To harm the country or to pollute the earth is as heinous an action as stabbing our mother.

Let the Grace of the Divine Mother enlighten our hearts and minds.

GOLDEN WORDS OF YORE

उत्तमे तु क्षणं कोपो मध्यमे घटिकाद्वयम् ।

अधमे स्यादहोरात्रं चाण्डाले मरणान्तिकः ॥

uttame tu kṣaṇam kopo madhyame ghaṭikādvayam

Adhame syādahorātram cāṇḍāle maraṇāntikah

Wrath lasts only for a moment in those who are noble; in ordinary people it remains for an hour or two; in the inferior people it continues for a day and a night; with those who are the worst it lasts till their death.

—The Samayochita Padyamalika

THE STRIKING DIFFERENCE



Super Rin strikes whiter
whiter than any other detergent tablet or bar

A quality product by Hindustan Lever

NEWS FLASH



FLYING SAUCERS

UFO or Unidentified Flying Objects: are they true, lies or illusions? We are not sure. Ellen Crystal of U.S.A. is one who seems particularly prone to seeing them. She had seen them umpteen times since 1971. Often she has led others to see them. "The metal on these craft seem to be transparent. They also seem to be able to generate their own cloud formation.. When you photograph them, you don't get what you see," she says. Scientists have not dismissed her experience as hallucination, for she is too serious in her research in UFO.

SOLAR BOAT

Kenichi Horie of Japan (46) has become the first man to cross the Pacific in a solar-powered boat, covering 6,300 km from Honolulu to Chichijima island in 75 days. Solar energy absorbed by solar battery panels converted it into electric power which propelled the boat.



ASIA'S LONGEST BRIDGE

Asia's longest and the world's third longest bridge has just been completed. It is 13.5 km long, linking Malaysia's northern Penang State with the mainland.

.....DID YOU KNOW?.....



History's greatest destroyer of books was Emperor Tsi Huany Ti (3rd century B.C.). He thought that if he burnt all books (books in those days meant rolls of log with inscription), history of civilisation will begin from him! He buried alive hundreds of authors and scholars who would not part with their books.

Arthur Thompson of Canada once made 103 golf shots in 1973. He was then 103 years old.



The average orbital speed of the earth around the sun is 66,641 miles per hour.

Czar Alexander III remarked on an application made by a convict, "Pardon impossible, to be sent to Siberia." The Czarina, who wanted to save the man, just altered the position of the comma, so that it read: "Pardon, impossible to be sent to Siberia." The man was released.



Did Nero fiddle while Rome burned?
No. Fiddle was yet to be invented and Nero was at Antium, away from Rome.

Roughly a quarter of the world's people live in China.



STORY OF

RAMA



—By Manoj Das

A BANDIT IN THE FOREST

A zigzag road passed through the forest. Even though the road did not enter deep into it, travellers avoided it as much as possible, for it was made dangerous by bandits.

And one particular bandit had grown notorious for his swift and cruel action. He sat crouching behind bushes or perched on branches of trees dense with foliage and sprang up before travellers causing great surprise, his axe raised ready for shedding blood. His growl and

gesture were terrifying enough for the travellers to surrender at once anything valuable they carried. He would brook no delay. A slight hesitation could be fatal for the traveller.

A lone sage was passing by the forest, absent-mindedly it seemed, when the bandit appeared before him, wielding his axe and giving out a nerve-wrecking cry. He was sure that the traveller would step back in panic and either swoon away or begin pleading with him to be





spared of his life.

But nothing like that happened. The traveller raised his head and fixed his deep calm look on the bandit's eyes. Even a subtle smile played on his lips.

"Bring out your wealth!" ordered the bandit.

"My wealth? All right. That will be yours. But what's the hurry about it?" spoke the sage firmly but sweetly.

Nobody had spoken to the bandit in such normal manner. He was surprised. But he did not give up his aggressive posture. "Why I'm in a hurry is none of your business. Do as I said or I'll smash your head in no

time!"

"Smash my head? Can you do that? Have you smashed any other head?"

The bandit laughed in a roar. "Any other head? You should ask this axe of mine! Rarely a day passes without this lucky weapon tasting human blood," he replied.

"Is that so? Your head must be very strong then, for the burden of sin sitting on it must be heavy!"

The sage's words gave a jolt to the bandit.

"What do you mean by that? I have a family to look after. It is for my wife and children that I plunder. If I am gathering any sin, they will share it. My burden cannot be too heavy!" he said haltingly.

"You're mistaken, I'm afraid. They are not likely to share your burden of sin. Why don't you go home and ask them about it? I'm willing to wait till your return," said the sage.

The bandit laughed. "Don't you try to be clever with me. You can't give me the slip so easily."

"I mean what I say. I suggest that you tie me to a tree and make a swift trip to your home.

You should be sure of your position once for all."

The idea appealed to the bandit. He tied the traveller to a tree with a rope made out of a strong creeper. Then he sped towards his home situated in another part of the forest. Indeed, the question the traveller raised had given him a shake. He did not belong to any tribe of criminals by birth. It was by accident that he had fallen into their company when quite young. His new guardians had trained him up as a bandit. He had never given any thought to the consequence of his action!

"Look here," he told his wife on reaching home, "In order to feed you and keep you in a little comfort, I snatch from others what they have earned through their labour. I don't know, but my doing this may be wrong. Sometimes I wound or even kill people when they clutch to the property I demand of them. This may be even a greater wrong for me to do. I am told that the sin resulting from such actions will bring me much suffering. But why should I fear? Are you not there to share my sin? Am I not doing all this for your sake and for the sake of



our children?"

The bandit's wife looked at him with surprise. "Why this strange question today? Did you ever consult me about the choice of your vocation? Were you not already a bandit even before marrying me? Let me tell you pointedly, my husband, that it is your duty to maintain me and to bring up your children. How you do that is entirely your business."

The answer stunned the bandit. He grew furious, but he realised that his fury was not going to alter the truth. He turned to his eldest child, a boy grown-up enough to understand

his question. The boy, who heard the dialogue between his parents with great attention, anticipated what his father was going to ask him. He said, "Father, I'm grateful to you for the care you bestow on me. When you are old or sick, I will look after you to the best of my ability. But I hardly know how you earn the means for bringing me up. I cannot be expected to share the consequence of your action, for I had never approved of it!"

The bandit felt as if the earth was fast shifting beneath his feet and he was dropping into a dark pit unfathomably deep. He threw away his axe and ran away.

He set the sage free. Tears flowing down his cheeks, he fell at the sage's feet, speechless.

The sage lifted the bandit up and embraced him. "Ratnakara!" he said, "I knew about you. I knew that you were a criminal not by nature, but by circumstances and habit. Your mind was clouded, but the clouds could be removed. It was high time you saw the light of truth. You can change your own destiny if you take a vow to do so."

It was difficult for Ratnakara to speak. He was sobbing. At last when he could gain some control over his emotions, he asked, "But, how, how on earth can this sinner see the light of truth? Who can unburden me of my sin?"

"The Grace of the Lord can!" answered the sage who was none other than Narada.

To continue





THE DANCER'S DEMAND

Markatpur was just a village on the banks of the river Mandakini. Yet it breathed an air of culture. Its people held many festivals and functions. The joy and devotion which these programmes generated made little Markatpur quite famous all over the kingdom of Vishala. In this village lived a danseuse named Malavika. Matchless for her beauty and art, she was respected by all.

The annual Vijaya festival held in the temple of goddess Mandakini was the greatest of all the festivals the villagers held. It was the occasion when Malavika would dance. That would be the grand finale of the celebrations.

The great day arrived. But Malavika, alas, was unwell. She could not participate in the

programme. And without her dance the festival lost much of its charm. The people of Markatpur were unhappy. The next day her admirers went up to her and said, "Malavika, without your dance the festival was lifeless. When we celebrate it next year, you must not fail to give a show. We will not feel satisfied otherwise."

She felt flattered and it went to her head. So, Markatpur's festival was lifeless without her! The people were missing her dance! Pride filled her mind at such thoughts.

Another year passed. The organising committee, as usual, went ahead with arrangements for Malavika's performance. But Malavika sent them a message asking them to see her before the celebrations begin.



They were surprised. This had never happened! However, that very evening two of them met her at her house.

She would not even show them the normal courtesy. "Look here," she said as soon as they entered, "every year you people have been giving me a purse of merely a hundred gold coins for my show. That is not enough. You will have to arrange for two hundred gold coins if you wish to see me dance." The callers were dumbstruck. More than her demand for money, what hurt them was her unbecoming manners. After an embarrassed silence, they

said, "All right, we'll discuss it among ourselves and inform you of our decision."

The organisers checked their budget. Alas, without collecting fresh funds it would not be possible to pay Malavika her enhanced fees. The committee did not know what to do. The laws of the land did not permit them to raise their funds beyond a fixed limit. The king's permission was necessary to cross that ceiling.

King Krishnadeva of Vishala was a very learned and pious ruler. A representative of the committee presented to him their petition regarding the demand of Malavika. The king heard the whole story and said, "Go and inform the other members of your committee that it will not be necessary to raise more money from the public. I shall give the extra hundred gold coins. Now, we have as our guest a sage named Chandrashekhar. I wish to request him to visit your village. You may request him to address the people, as is your custom, on the last day of the celebrations."

Malavika was informed that her demand had been accepted.

The festival began and it went

on very well. On the last day, before Malavika was to present her dance, the sage gave his discourse. Malavika heard him, seated in the front row.

"Compassion is just another aspect of love. Bringing forth a child from herself, a woman shows herself as an embodiment of love. As a mother as well as a wife she bestows her compassion on all. If her child comes to her, crying, 'O Mother, where had you been? I was so frightened!'", the mother's heart melts in compassion and she resolves never again to leave the child alone. When her husband fondly complains, 'You were not

home yesterday. That made things so difficult for me!', she decides never again to cause him any inconvenience. Like a mother, a true artiste bestows her love on all. When she understands that people are missing her art—I mean her dance or music—her heart, like a mother's, grows anxious to fulfil their yearning. Only a greedy person will seek to profit by the gift with which God, the Supreme Artiste, has made her rich. Such an artiste is ignorant of the very existence of love and tries to evaluate their love and respect in terms of money and busy herself on amassing



wealth..."

With such words of wisdom and advice the discourse went on. Facing the sage, Malavika felt more and more uneasy and a deepening anguish filled her heart.

As soon as the discourse was over she rushed into the chamber of the organising committee. With tears in her eyes, she prayed to be forgiven. "Arrogance and vanity had blinded me," she confessed. "No more do I want that gold. Greed made me forget my dharma—lose the dignity and sanctity of my precious art," she said.

The committee members were surprised and pleased. Soon a calm and stately figure entered the room. Krishnadeva himself had joined the audience in disguise. Now he revealed

himself, a smile of satisfaction playing on his face. "Malavika, I am proud of you. When I heard of your strange demand I would not believe it, for you were a true artiste. Look how your sincere heart has rekindled the nobility that was for a time covered up by the clouds of vanity. Henceforth you are the State Artiste of the kingdom of Vishala and will enjoy special privileges."

Soon she progressed to greater heights and justly earned the highest honours her vocation could bring. But never again did she lose the humility and compassion which the sage had inspired in her. And never did she allow anything to prevent her from offering her dance to the goddess Mandakini at the annual festival.



THE BEAUTIFUL

This happened centuries ago. There was a woman who worked for the queen. She swept the queen's apartment and the queen trusted her very much.

Sometimes the woman picked up pearls of gold beads which had fallen from the queen's many necklaces and other ornaments. She faithfully restored them to the queen. Sometimes the queen was so happy with her that she let her keep a few such precious things for herself.

The woman's little son lived at his maternal uncle's house. It was because the uncle was a teacher and a number of boys lived with him for their education.

One day the boy returned to his parents' house. At night he saw the pearls and the gold beads his mother had stored. "How beautiful these are!" he exclaimed.

"They are beautiful. But, my son, only if you see the queen adorned by such precious



things, you'll know what true beauty is," commented the boy's mother.

The boy fell silent. He went out and did not return even after hours had passed. The anxious parents began looking for him. Neighbours also co-operated with them in their search of the boy. But he was not to be seen.

Years later the mother received a message from her son: "Mother, I had heard from my uncle that the sun, the moon, the stars, the sky, were all orna-

ments of God. Your comment that while the ornaments were beautiful, the queen who put them on was much more beautiful suddenly inspired in me a different urge. The sun, the moon, the stars are so beautiful. How magnificent must be God whom they adorn! I went out in search of Him. You will be happy to learn that I have found Him. He is so magnificent that words cannot describe His charm!"

The mother wept, but she was also happy that her son had found God.





Oliver Twist

Back in the fold of Fagin, Oliver is reprimanded by him for his 'ingratitude' and put in fright with dark threats. He then takes him to one Bill Sikes who at pistol point, forces Oliver into a burglary mission with another, Toby Crackit.



Clambering through the window, Oliver advanced slowly into the darkness until he came to the door, which he unbolted with trembling fingers. Almost at the same moment, he heard a sudden cry and a light half-dazzled him. Turning, he saw two men, obviously servants standing at the top of the stairs.

There was a crash and Oliver staggered back. Sikes appeared and took Oliver by the collar, "Come on, boy," he shouted. "Run for your life!" Upon saying that, Sikes dragged Oliver into the darkness, with Toby following close behind them. "They've hit him," Sikes said.





Seeing that Oliver could go no further, Sikes stopped and kept low, resting the boy against his knees. He looked for his pursuers, but there was little to be made out in the mist and darkness. It was at this point that Toby panicked and beat a hasty retreat. "Stop, you white-livered robber!" Sikes shouted after him.

"It's all up, Bill," Toby called back over his shoulder. "Drop the kid and run." Sikes clenched his teeth, took one look around, and then decided to take Toby's advice. Laying Oliver on the ground, he fled into the darkness.



Oliver lay motionless and insensible on the spot where Sikes had left him until the morning when he finally awoke. Trembling in every limb, he made an effort to stand upright. Urged by a creeping sickness at his heart that seemed to warn him that he must receive help quickly, he stumbled forward, uncertain of his destination.





It began to rain heavily and this aroused Oliver enough for him to be able to look about him. He saw that at no great distance, there was a house which, perhaps, he could reach. Summoning his strength, he bent his faltering steps towards it. It was for this reason that presently the two gentlemen who were inside the house, opened it to a faint knock and found young Oliver on the doorstep.

The gentlemen in question were Mr. Giles, the butler and general steward of the house, and Brittle, his assistant. Together they carried the fainting boy into the hall. In the midst of all this disturbance there was heard a gentle voice. The voice belonged to Miss Rose, who shared the house with Mrs. Maylie, her aunt. "Is the poor creature much hurt?" she called out from the stair-head.



"Wounded desperate miss," replied Giles. After going back for a hasty consultation with her aunt, the same gentle speaker returned and bade them carry the wounded person upstairs, and to send with all speed for a constable and a doctor. The doctor was the first to arrive.



Soon after his wound had been dressed Oliver awoke and was soon able to tell them all the whole sad story. Whereupon, everyone present was determined to prevent his arrest. But first there was the matter of Mr. Giles and Brittle to deal with. The doctor decided to save the boy, and to that end he went down to the kitchen, where the two men were enjoying themselves in the company of the constable who had just arrived. "How is the patient, sir?" enquired Mr. Giles.



"So-so," returned the doctor. "I'm afraid you have got yourself in a trap, Mr. Giles. A boy comes to this house very ill, and you assume that he was the boy you saw last night. Now tell me this! Are you both going to take it upon yourselves to swear that the boy who now lies upstairs is the same boy you saw?"



Under such circumstances, neither Mr. Giles nor Mr. Brittle were prepared to identify the boy, and the constable went on his way. Oliver gradually recovered, and was soon well enough to help the two kind ladies who had befriended him.

To Continue

THE JESTER AND HIS HORSE

The king was very fond of laughing at his jester's expense. It was, of course, not so easy to do that.

One day the king was out for a stroll, accompanied by his courtiers. The jester was coming from the opposite direction, riding his horse. He dismounted as soon as he saw the king and bowed to him.

"Hello, my good jester, is it not funny that your horse is so strong and stout while you are so lean and weak? observed the king.

"My lord, I feed my horse, whereas I am fed by Your Highness!" quipped the jester.

It was with difficulty that the courtiers controlled their laughter.





THE COCONUT-THIEF

Mangal was a gardener appointed by Kishore to look after his orchard. Mangal loved the saplings in the orchard. He watered them regularly and took utmost care of them. He was happy to see them grow.

However, being very poor, he could not maintain himself with the small salary. One day he requested his master, Kishore, to increase his salary by ten rupees.

"Why are you in such haste, Mangal? You are going to be with us for long and when the trees grow big I'll increase your pay," replied Kishore.

Mangal worked harder in the orchard. Soon, the trees started giving fruits.

The young gardener

approached Kishore one evening and requested him again for a raise in his salary.

"Look here, Mangal, it is true that the trees have grown. But did you make them grow? It is the good soil of my land, the plenty of water available in my pond and the sunlight that made them grow. Why should I pay you more?" asked Kishore.

Poor Mangal returned, very disappointed. He had thought that by working honestly he would get a higher salary. But, his master deceived him. Soon, to his dismay, Kishore found that coconuts were missing from his orchard. He called Mangal and ordered, "From tonight you sleep in the garden and see that the coconuts are not stolen."

"Sir, I'm ready to sleep in the

garden only if you agree to increase my pay," replied Mangal.

"What nonsense! I shall never increase your pay. Begone!" shouted Kishore.

In the evening, Kishore went to the village temple and told the priest, "Punditji, I promise to perform a special Puja if the deity can show me tonight the thief who is stealing away coconuts from my orchard."

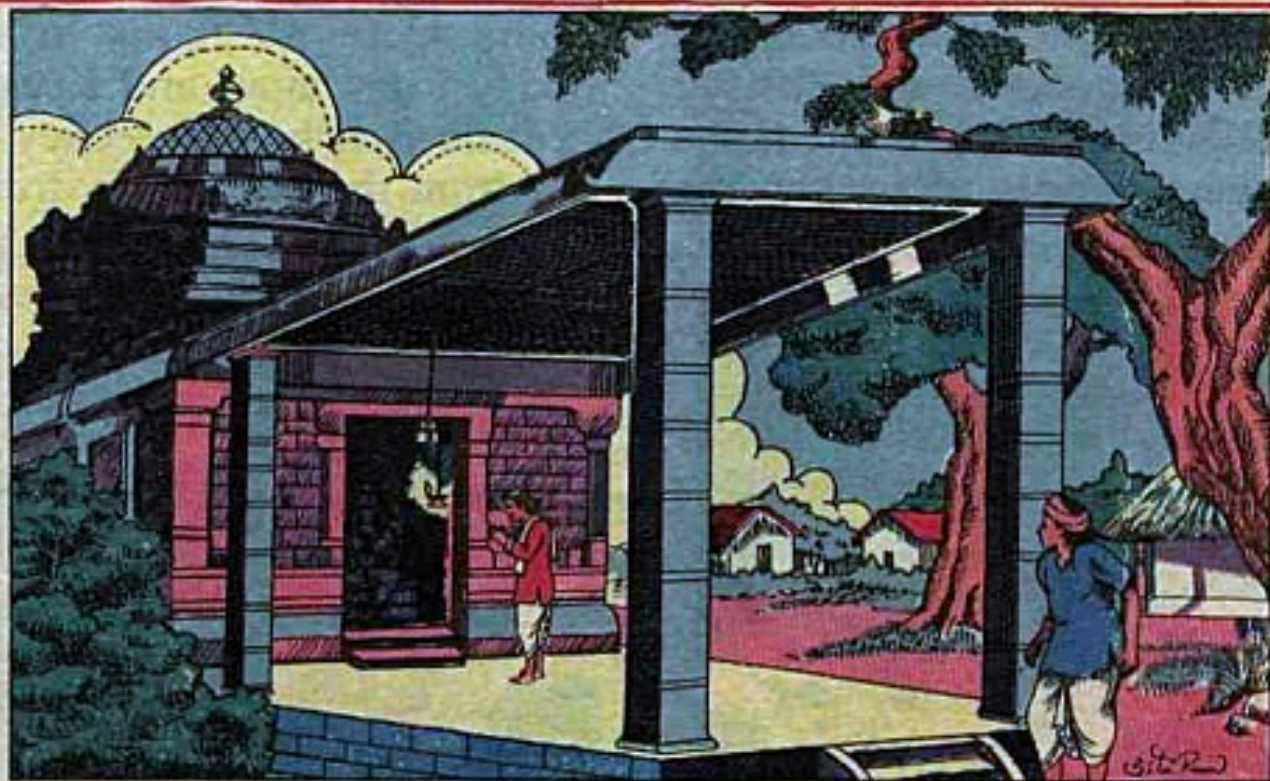
"I'll convey your prayers to the deity," replied the priest.

A few minutes later Mangal also came to the temple and told the priest, "I do not know who steals my master's coco-

nuts. But I'm going to teach my master a lesson so that he will realise the very need for paying me more. Please tell the deity to protect me. I shall offer Her five coconuts!"

At midnight, Mangal climbed up the coconut tree that stood near the orchard-well. He plucked a coconut and threw it far. He thought of fooling his master.

But, Kishore was a clever man. He had already seen someone climbing the coconut tree, although, he could not recognise the thief. He shouted loudly, "You thief! You think that you can direct my attention



elsewhere! I've seen you already. You have no chance of escaping now."

Suddenly, there was a splashing sound in the well.

Kishore, thinking that the thief had jumped into the well, dived into the well determined to catch him. Meanwhile, Mangal quickly climbed down the tree and escaped in the darkness. Needless to say, he had thrown only a coconut into the well.

Next morning, Mangal went and offered to the goddess five coconuts, in gratitude.

Soon after that, Kishore went to the temple and told the priest, "I saw the thief but I could not catch him. I will not offer the goddess any Puja."

"Kishore, you wanted the goddess only to show you the

thief and you have been able to see him. Haven't you? I'm afraid the goddess did not believe you. Since you did not keep your promise to Mangal, one who has brought you so much benefit, how can she be sure that you will keep your promise to Her?"

Kishore went back, his head hung. He realised that had he increased Mangal's salary, he could have saved his coconuts. Also, he would have gained the respect of Mangal and the priest!

The next day, he called Mangal and informed him that his salary had been increased. There were no thefts in the orchard any more and Kishore became rich by the money he got from the sale of the fruits.





THE COPPER RING

Sridhar had lost his parents in his childhood. He was brought up by his grandfather. Being the only grandson, he was much pampered. So Sridhar grew up to be a young man but without knowledge of any specific work.

After losing his grandfather, Sridhar tried to get a job in his village. But, no one would give him one. "What work do you know? Have you ever learnt any work all these days? You lazy fellow! Begone!" said everyone.

Sridhar decided to go to the town, where people did not know him, and seek work. But, there the business people said, "You are a stranger to our village. How can we trust you?

Sorry, we cannot employ you!"

Disappointed, Sridhar spent his days in a dharmasala.

One night, he heard running footsteps in the house adjacent to the dharmasala. When he peeped over the dividing compound wall, he saw to his surprise a young maiden running towards a well. He jumped over the wall, ran and caught hold of the maiden just when she was about to jump into the well.

"You foolish girl, what are you doing?" scolded Sridhar.

"I've decided to end my life," replied the sobbing maiden.

"Whatever your difficulties, you should never commit suicide. It is a great sin," said



Sridhar.

"Sin or no sin, I can't help it. How can I marry a man of sixty years and a cruel man at that? It is better to end it this way," replied Vijaya.

Vijaya's step-mother was very unkind to her. She tormented her, heaping on her all the household chores while she pampered her own daughter. She wanted to give Vijaya in marriage to an old wealthy man so that the money received from the old man could be used to find a wealthy and handsome young man for her own daughter.

After hearing the sad tale

from Vijaya, Sridhar managed to send her back that night.

Next morning, he went straight to the parents of Vijaya and asked for Vijaya's hand in marriage.

"What a foolish man you are!" said Vijaya's step-mother. "You have neither a home nor a job for yourself, and you want to marry my daughter! How stupid!"

Sridhar left the place and again went in search of a job. Evening came and still he had no job. Not wanting to return to the dharmasala, he walked, absentmindedly and remorsefully, into a forest and lay down under a big banyan tree.

At midnight he heard a terrific sound and he woke up startled from his sleep. He saw in front of him a weird form.

"You mortal! I'm amazed at your audacity. How dare you occupy my place of rest?" asked the spirit.

"Well, I've known human beings much more cruel than you spirits can be. Why should I be afraid of you?"

"What do you say? Are men worse than us? How is that?" asked the spirit.

Sridhar then told him about

his sad story and said, "Men are heartless. They are harsh too!"

"Do not bother, young man," said the ghost. "I shall help you. We spirits are better than the human beings! Didn't you say so?"

The spirit then went to a nearby tree, dug out a little hole at its roots and brought out an old copper ring. Giving it to Sridhar, he said, "Put on this ring. It will bring you whatever you wish for. But, mind you, you can get only three wishes out of it—not more."

Next morning, Sridhar went to the wealthiest merchant in town and said, "I would like to have a job in your shop."

"Surely", said the merchant. "In fact, I was looking for someone like you. Please join us right away." He was one of the merchants who had earlier refused even to listen to Sridhar.

That evening, Sridhar went to Vijaya's step-mother and said, "Mother, now that I've a job, I'll be happy if you let me marry Vijaya."

"I'll be happier if you do so," replied the step-mother. "We can fix an auspicious date for the marriage right next week."

And, Sridhar and Vijaya were



married the next week.

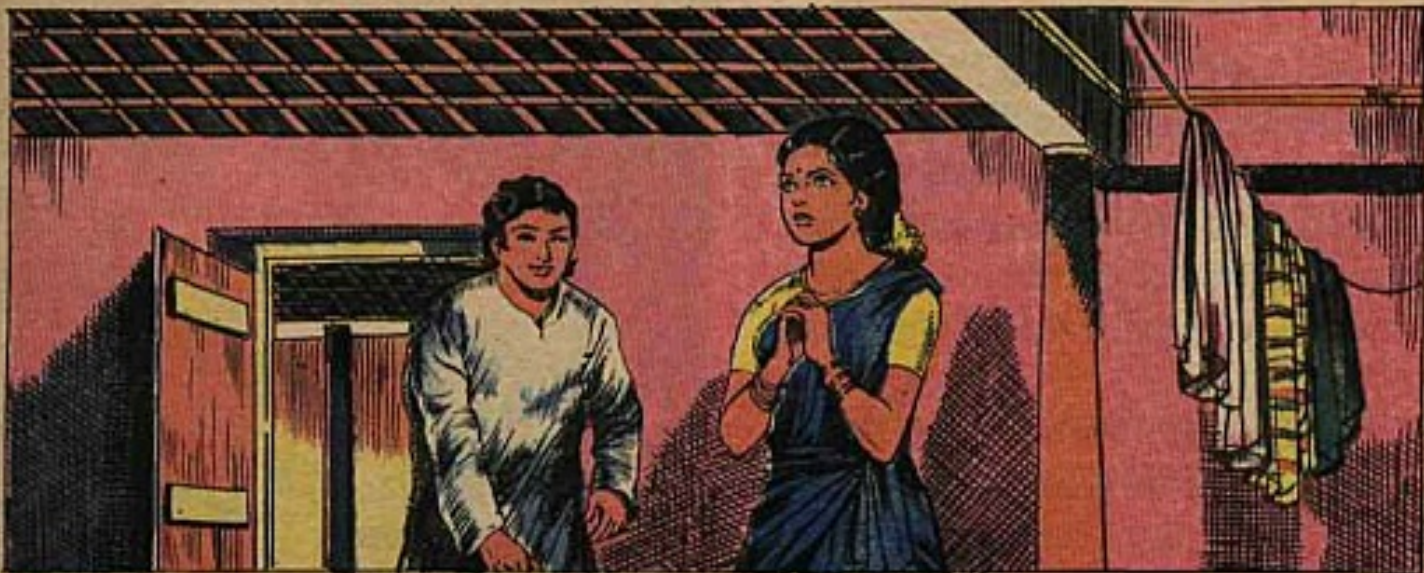
A few days after their marriage Vijaya asked her husband, "How could you get a job in one day and then make my step-mother give her consent to our marriage, especially when she was so particular about a very wealthy son-in-law?"

Sridhar then told her about the magic of the copper ring.

Vijaya gave out a shriek.

"What happened to you?" asked Sridhar.

"About three days back, when I was cleaning the house I found the ring in a trunk. Seeing that it was an old rusted ring, I threw it away at the back of the



house," sobbed Vijaya.

"Do not be upset about it. We have no use of it any more," said Sridhar.

But Vijaya searched for it and retrieved it from a heap of dust and broken things.

"The ring has such great magic power and how very silly of you to have asked for just two simple things!" said Vijaya. "You should have asked from the merchant a share in his business, and, you should have demanded a house from my parents! In any case, the ring has granted you only two boons. A third one is yet to be got out of it!"

She put on the ring and said, "I hope you have no objection if I ask for the last boon, have you?"

"Surely not," replied Sridhar, and then he laughed.

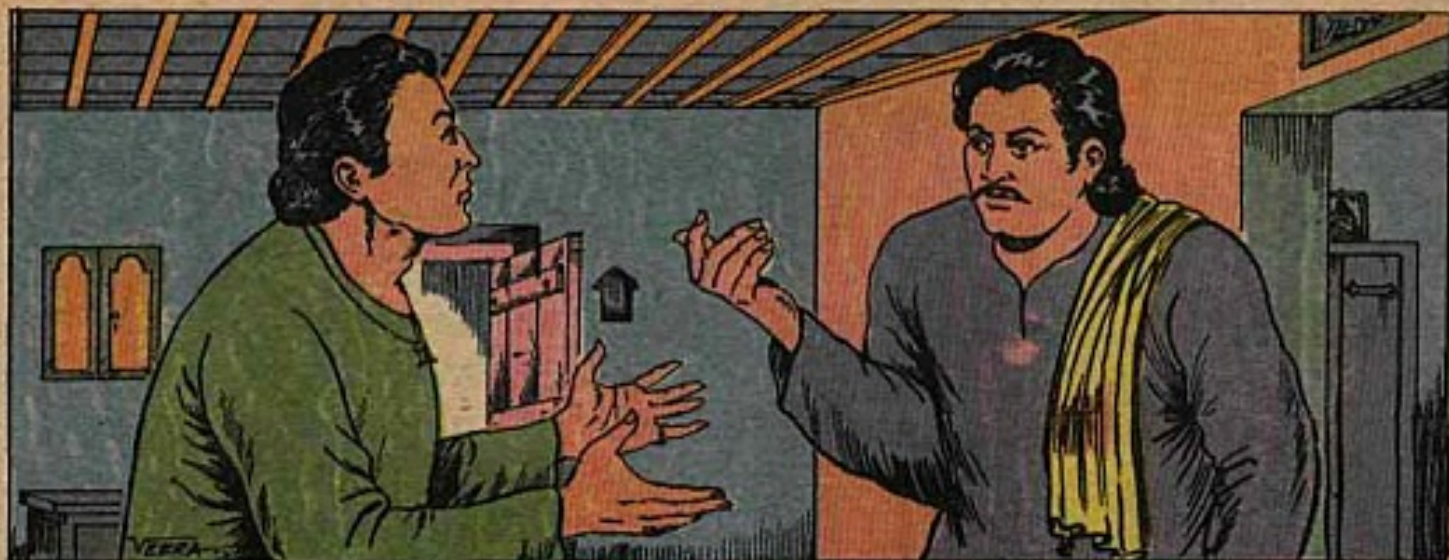
"Why, what has happened?" asked Vijaya, puzzled.

"Well, the third wish is over! You asked me for something and I consented to it—so your wish is realised," explained Sridhar.

Vijaya was disheartened. She began to weep.

"It is no use crying now. One should not be greedy. Did you not tell me few weeks back that you would be most happy if you married me and that you desire nothing else? Well, you see, this is how man's greed increases endlessly bringing sorrow and disappointment in the way!" explained Sridhar.

After a few days, Vijaya quietened down and one day she told Sridhar, "I've now realised how beautiful it is to be contented with the little things of life."



LITTLE IS PLENTY

Many years ago, there lived in a small town a rich trader. His name was Shivgupta.

One day he fell ill. His fever lasted for many days. Seeing his helpless condition, his clerks and workers began to misappropriate and his business was ruined. One by one they left him.

He had no other way but to sell off his wife's jewellery and the expensive things at home to buy medicine for himself.

A few months later he recovered his health. But Shivgupta was a pauper now.

Not knowing what to do, he went one day to a friend of his.

His friend Jayram received him well. After a while Shivgup-

ta told him about his misfortune and requested him for a loan of one hundred rupees.

"Dear friend," asked Jayram, "if a person earns his living by plucking coconuts and if by ill luck he falls down and breaks his legs, should he try again to climb a coconut tree?"

Shivgupta understood what Jayram was hinting at. He replied curtly, "Dear Jayram, if the coconut tree climber breaks his leg once, he'll try to climb next time with greater caution. But, he'll not leave his profession."

Jayram saw that Shivgupta was quite annoyed. In order to appease him he said, "You have come to me at a time when my



note of anger and disgust.

"But, do you have only four friends in the whole town?" asked his wife, Shanti. "You have spent all your life here. Don't you have more friends?"

"Yes, I have. But of what use are they?" questioned Shivgupta with a sigh.

"That is for me to decide. Please prepare a list of all your friends giving their addresses, and give it to me," requested Shanti.

That night, Shivgupta sat at his table and wrote down the names and addresses of all his friends. He handed over the list to his wife.

Next morning Shanti called her son and said, "My son, here is a list of all the friends of your father. Go to each one of them and tell them that your father would like to have a loan of one hundred rupees. If any one is ready to give the loan, tell him that your father will meet him and collect it."

The boy left early in the morning and returned home in the evening. In his hand was a bag full of money. His parents were surprised to see the amount of money he had brought with him.

own business is not running well. I cannot give you the money you need. But, here are five rupees which I can spare for you. Please do not bother to return the money." And he gave a five-rupee note to Shivgupta.

Next, Shivgupta went to three other friends of his. All the three responded more or less in the same manner as Jayram.

Disappointed, Shivgupta returned home and told his wife all about his friends. "Because I am bankrupt now, no one wants to help me," he said.

"They are only showing me sympathy by donating a few coins!" Shivgupta added with a



"Who gave you all that money?" asked Shivgupta.

"No one. None is ready to give you a loan of one hundred rupees. But, many gave a small sum of two rupees or five rupees each and said that you need not return the amount," replied the

son.

The bag contained about five hundred rupees and with it Shivgupta began a small business. Within five years he regained his old wealthy status.

He remained ever grateful to his wife but for whom he could not have revived his business.

SPOT THE TEN DIFFERENCES



GLIDING TO SAFETY

When flying squirrels find themselves in trouble in their tree-top homes, they simply stretch their "wings", jump off—and take the quick way down.

HIGH above the watching crowds, tiny figures drop from the open door of a big aircraft. At first they fall like stones, then suddenly the sky divers spread arms and legs and at once change their descent to a series of graceful dives and swoops. Sometimes the divers wear special dress with wide-cut sleeves, giving them a strangely bat-like appearance as they drift downwards.

At times it seems as though these daredevil performers are really flying. But of course they are not. However graceful their passage through the air may be up to the final opening of the parachute, they are falling all the time. Even their names admit this: sky divers, free fall parachutists, perhaps, but never flyers. All of which seems to be rather unfair when one remembers that the fascinating animals we readily call flying squirrels operate in exactly the same way.

Flying squirrels, *petauristinae*, are an excellent example of how nature allows creatures to adapt themselves to their environment. There are no less than 37 species of this furry little mammal spread over Europe, Asia and North America. Strictly speaking, they should be called gliding squirrels, because, like sky-diving man, they can only swoop and plane through the air and have no capacity for true flight. Nevertheless, what they can do is astonishing enough. This is achieved by means of a membrane of fur-covered skin that connects the wrists of the forefeet and the ankles of the hind feet, with a rod of cartilage acting as a spreader. Leaping outwards into space flying squirrels spread their gliding membranes and sail, sometimes 50 metres or more, to a lower landing-place.

Flying squirrels "fly" as a means of self-preservation from predators and because their share of nature's housing plan is in the world of the high trees. Some flying squirrels do, in fact, glide to the ground in search of the odd nut or fruit. Yet almost the whole of their lives is spent among the upper branches that provide their food and where they make their dens, swoop-

ing from one place to another with apparently no more concern than a bird in flight.

Study of close-up and slow-motion cine film shows that this aerial travel is not quite as simple as it may seem. Before making a jump, a flying squirrel will sway its head from side to side, as if estimating the distance to the proposed landing-place. It then launches itself with considerable force, spreading its membrane as it heads for its objective.

Just before landing, it raises its large tail, which effectively pulls its head up, thus turning its "wings" into an air brake to slow it for landing. The moment its feet touch the tree, the flying squirrels instinctively scramble round to the other side of the trunk in order to escape any waiting predator.

Good Camouflage

Flying squirrels are a good deal more cautious than their more common cousins. Their coat takes on the shades and patterns of the trees; and they seek their food largely at night, spending the day curled up asleep or, if the temperature is too high for comfort, stretched out on a branch with their extended membranes acting as an aid to cooling.

As this may seem curiously cautious for a creature so well equipped for self-preservation, but it is possible that flying squirrels pay quite dearly for their special ability. Certainly, the eye of the American flying squirrel is not as complex an instrument as that of a tree squirrel, as it has a blind spot. Moreover, the gliding membranes interfere with the mobility of the limbs, so that daylight competition with ordinary tree squirrels would probably be difficult. They also glide at the remarkably slow speed of 6.5 km/h, which would make them an easy prey in daylight to the larger predatory birds.

Flying squirrels are by no means unique as gliders within the animal kingdom. In the Philippines and Malayan Peninsula, there are two species of colugo, sometimes wrongly called "flying lemurs".

Members of the *Dermoptera* (skin-winged) order of mammals, colugos have voluminous double folds of skin joining the front and hind limbs and tail. These folds of skin give the colugo the appearance of being wrapped in a woolly blanket when it is at rest, hanging head upwards on a tree trunk, with its sharp claws dug into the bark.

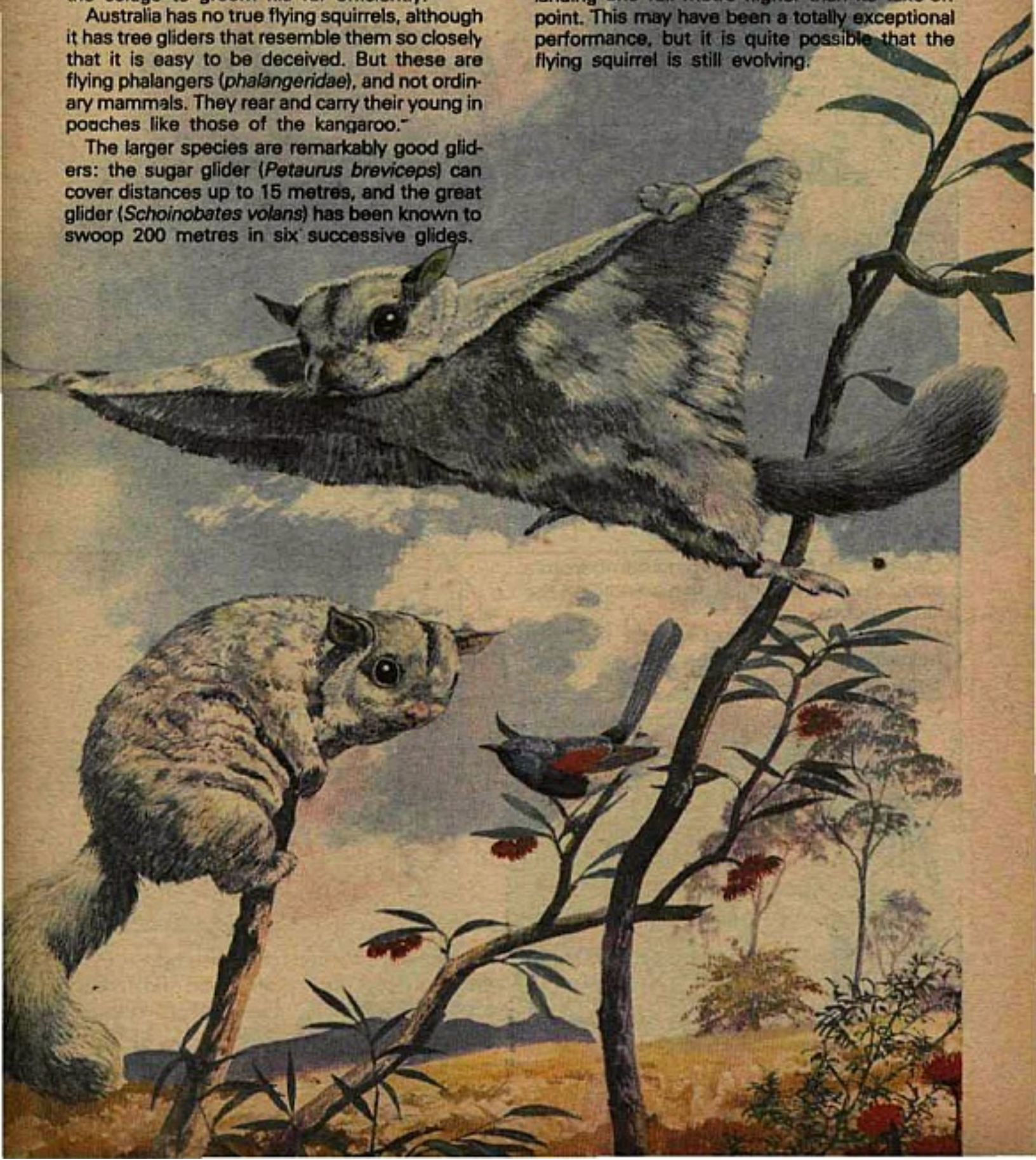
This cat-sized animal lives mainly on fruit and flowers, and has curiously divided front teeth

that resemble tiny combs. Experts are unable to agree as to whether this odd dental formation is used to strain juice from fruit or simply enable the colugo to groom his fur efficiently.

Australia has no true flying squirrels, although it has tree gliders that resemble them so closely that it is easy to be deceived. But these are flying phalangers (*phalangeridae*), and not ordinary mammals. They rear and carry their young in pouches like those of the kangaroo."

The larger species are remarkably good gliders: the sugar glider (*Petaurus breviceps*) can cover distances up to 15 metres, and the great glider (*Schoinobates volans*) has been known to swoop 200 metres in six successive glides.

Although the flying squirrel has never been known to achieve flight, one species has been observed to flap its membranes and succeed in landing one full metre higher than its take-off point. This may have been a totally exceptional performance, but it is quite possible that the flying squirrel is still evolving.



Laughs from Many Lands

**CAN'T YOU GO WITHOUT
CHEESE EVEN FOR A DAY?**

In Isfahan lived a miser who asked his son, on the latter's birthday, what he would have as a gift. The son wanted some cheese to eat with bread.

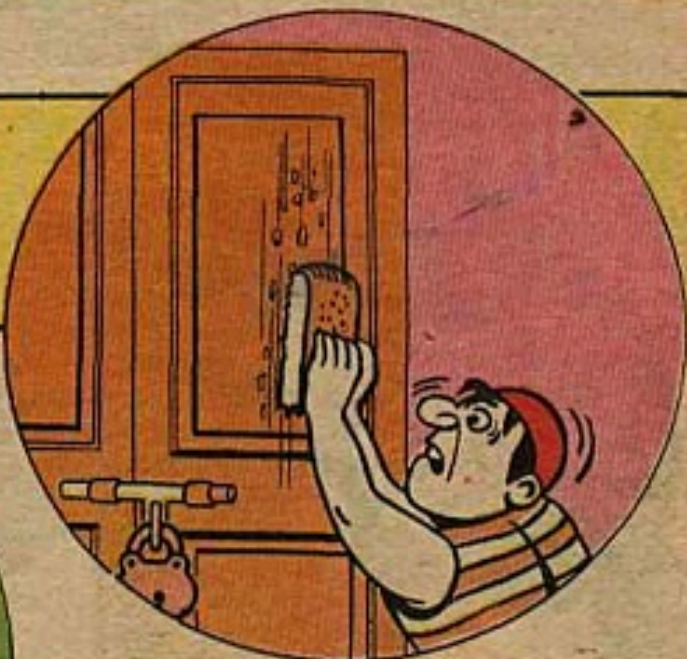


The miser bought a piece of cheese, but put it in a bottle and said, "Sonny, instead of eating up the cheese, we can very well rub our bread against the bottle. Thereby we can enjoy the cheese for long!"



One day the father, returning home from a walk, saw the son rubbing his bread on the kitchen-door.

"I'm rubbing my bread against the door because the cheese-bottle is locked inside," he explained.



"Look here, my son, can't you go without cheese even for a day?" said the father sternly. "How are you going to remain rich?"





New Tales of King
Vikram and the Vampire

WAS THE CURSE EFFECTIVE?

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time. At the intervals of thunderclaps and the moaning of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning showed fearful faces.

But King Vikram swerved not. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought the corpse down. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed him said, "O King, what do you lack that you should take up such an unusual task at such an unearthly hour? Are you obliged to do this under any curse? Whether a curse brings one misfortune or not is a big question. Let me narrate an incident to you. Pay attention to it. That might bring you some relief."

The vampire went on: In the city of Shripur lived a wealthy merchant named Dhanagupta. He had a palatial house flanked by gardens and orchards and he



commanded a number of servants. But he was not happy because he was childless.

He heard from a traveller that in the forest spread along the frontier of the kingdom lives a hermit named Brahmananda. His blessings can result in couples having children.

One morning Dhanagupta set out for the forest. He spent three days and three nights on the way. Then he saw the forest. It was evening. He spent the night in the village close to the forest. The villagers told him many things about Sage Brahmananda and also told him one must proceed alone to meet the sage if one desired any boon

from him.

Dhanagupta left his chariot in the custody of the villagers and entered the forest alone. He had to walk for hours before he saw the sage's hermitage. Extremely tired, he set down under a tree.

He saw a boy sweeping the hermitage campus. He called the boy and said, "Will you massage my legs for a while?" I'll pay you for your service."

"You need not pay me. Will you massage my legs in return for my service?" asked the boy.

Dhanagupta flared up. "How dare you say so! Don't you have any reverence for age, you fool? Am I not much senior to you?"

The boy laughed and said, "Suppose you had a son. Do you think your servants who would serve him would be necessarily younger than he?"

Instead of calming down, Dhanagupta grew even more angry at the boy's clever answer. "How dare you compare my son, if I had one, with yourself? My son would inherit my property amounting to a crore of rupees. You are a mere sweeper. Don't you understand the difference?" he shouted.

The boy laughed once again. "It is difficult to say who is rich

and who is poor. You're here to beg something of my master. In other words, you are a beggar. I have no need of anything. I'm rich."

With these words the boy sat down for massaging Dhanagupta's legs. But Dhanagupta moved his legs away with such force that it appeared as if he kicked the boy.

The boy sprang up. "You may be blessed with a son through my master's blessings, but you deserve to suffer the pangs of separation from your son, nevertheless!" he said in a manner that sounded like a curse.

The boy left the spot in a huff. An elderly inmate of the Ashram walked towards Dhanagupta and asked him, "Why did Gopal grow so angry?" Dhanagupta told him all that had happened.

"It is a pity that you angered Gopal. He may be a small boy but he is a Sadhak. He has some power. His curse may become a fact! He was only probing your ego," said the inmate.

Dhanagupta woke up to his folly. "But how can Gopal's curse befall me? If I am blessed with a son, I'll guard him like the apple of my eye!" said he.



"My friend, if something is to happen, it may happen in any of the many ways. Suppose, soon after its birth your child gets mixed up with someone else's child. Will that not separate you from your child?" answered the inmate.

The inmate then went in and informed Sage Brahmananda about Dhanagupta's visit. The sage called him in. Dhanagupta bowed down to him and appealed to him to grant him a son.

The sage gave him a talisman. "Tie this to your wife's arm. Your desire will be fulfilled," he said.



Dhanagupta expressed his deep gratefulness to the sage and, after some hesitation, reported to him all about his quarrel with Gopal. "O Sage, do you think Gopal's curse will be effective? I was tired and I acted like a fool," he said.

"Dhanagupta! No curse can act on one who is egoless or who depends on God and always seeks His protection. Don't you worry. If at all the curse works, Gopal himself will one day set you free from its effect," assured Brahmananda.

Dhanagupta returned home Gopal's curse hung on his head like a cloud. A year passed. His

wife fell seriously ill when it was time for her to give birth to her child. She had to be carried to a famous physician's house where there were several other patients.

Soon after Dhanagupta's wife was delivered of a son, her maid-servant saw an unknown woman going out of her room. The maid-servant shouted to know who she was and what her business was in that room. But the woman ran away.

When Dhanagupta heard this he was sure that Gopal's curse had become effective in the very way foreseen by the elder inmate of the hermitage. He took it for granted that the infant child lying near his wife was not theirs. Their child had been exchanged for someone else's child.

He remembered the sage's consolation that one day Gopal can set him free from his curse. He went to the hermitage again, but Gopal was no longer there.

He waited for the day he would meet Gopal. Years passed. The child they nurtured won all their affection, though they were eager to find their lost son.

Some seven years passed.

One day Dhanagupta learnt about one Gopal Baba camping in the nearby village. He paid a visit to him and recognised him to be the Gopal of Brahmananda's hermitage.

"Gopalji, your curse became effective. Now, be pleased to withdraw it," Dhanagupta said with humility.

Gopal remembered his quarrel with him. He meditated for a moment and said, "Dhanagupta! I don't know what made you think that you are separated from your son. The boy you are bringing up is none other than your son!"

Dhanagupta was happy. He invited Gopal to his house and Gopal blessed his son.

The vampire paused for a moment and then demanded of King Vikram in a challenging tone: "O King, how is it that

Gopal's curse did not work? Was Dhanagupta egoless and prayful to God? Answer me, if you can. Should you keep mum despite your knowledge of the answer, your head would roll off your neck!"

Forthwith answered King Vikram: "Who said that Gopal's curse did not work? Gopal had said that Dhanagupta must suffer the pangs of separation from his son. Although his son was with him, Dhanagupta took it for granted that his son had been exchanged for another's son. That gave him the pang. Dhanagupta was not an egoless man nor was he that prayful. But he had repented for his rough conduct. That shortened the period of his suffering."

No sooner had the king concluded his answer than the vampire, along with the corpse, gave him the slip.



A Tale from the Katha-sarit-sagara

THE SILENT SACRIFICE

In the city of Vikramapura there lived, long ago, a king named Vikramtunga. He was famous for his statemanship, and though his sword was sharp, his heart was soft.

Once a young Brahmin named Viravara, hailing from the country of Malava, came there to take service under the king. He had with him his wife, a daughter, and a son. He had at his waist a dagger, in one hand a sword, and in the other a polished shield. He demanded

five hundred coins every day by way of salary. The king appointed him as the gate-keeper of his palace and granted him that salary, thinking to himself: "I will try his capacity soon!" The king set spies on him to find out what this man, would do with so many coins!

Every day Viravara gave his wife a hundred coins for food and other necessities. With another hundred he bought clothes and gifts and so on; and he spent a third hundred, on the





worship of Vishnu and Siva. The remaining two hundred he gave away in charity.

Viravara remained day and night at the gate of the palace, sword in hand, except for the time set apart for bathing, saying prayers or taking food.

One day a great storm broke forth. It rained heavily, but Viravara stood like a pillar and did not leave his station. King Vikramatunga saw him through the window of a tower and thought, "Surely, this brave and faithful man deserves a high salary."

Suddenly the king heard a woman crying loudly at some

distance. Surprised, he thought, "There is not a single distressed person in my kingdom. Who then weeps?" He called Viravara and said, "Go and find out who is weeping and what her sorrow is."

Viravara set out brandishing his sword. The king, moved by curiosity, came down from the tower and followed him, sword in hand, unobserved.

Viravara proceeded in the direction of the noise. He reached a lake outside the city. He saw a woman crying out in the midst of it: "Ah lord! merciful one, how shall I live abandoned by thee?"

"Who are you and what Lord do you pray to?" asked Viravara. She replied, "My son, know that I am the Spirit of this kingdom and Vikramatunga is my lord. He is to die on the third day from now."

"If there is any way for saving the king, pray, tell me," said Viravara.

"There is an image of a goddess behind the palace. If you offer to that image your son, the king will be spared by fate," came the grim answer from the Spirit.

"I will go and do the needful

immediately." The king who followed him, saw and heard all.

Viravara returned to his house. The king followed him. Viravara woke up his wife and told her what had happened. "We must do what is for the advantage of our king; so wake up our son and tell him," said the lady.

Then Viravara woke up his son and narrated the events to him. The child heard his father calmly and said, "Am I not fortunate that my life can profit the good king? Take me and sacrifice me to the goddess without any delay."

King Vikramatunga, who was standing outside said to himself, "All the members of this family are all surprisingly noble!" Viravara took his son on his shoulder and his wife Dharmavati took their daughter on her back and the two went to the temple by night.

King Vikramatunga followed them. When they reached the temple, the boy bowed to the deity and said, "Goddess, may our lord's life be saved by the offering of my head and may he rule the kingdom without an enemy to oppose him."

"Bravo, my son!" exclaimed



his father. Then, drawing his sword, he cut off the boy's head and offered it to the goddess, saying, "May the king live long and rule the kingdom with truth and justice."

"Viravara, you have bestowed life on your master by sacrificing the life of your son! How noble you are!"

Viravara's daughter embraced her slain brother and cried out, "Alas, my brother!" Then she died of broken heart. When Viravara's wife saw that her daughter too was dead, she clasped her hands together and said to Viravara, "Permit me to enter the fire with my two dead

children, for what joy is there for me, my two lovely children having departed?" And she swooned away.

Viravara murmured to himself, "I have done my duty towards my master. Why should I not propitiate the goddess by offering up myself?" He was preparing to cut off his own head when a voice was heard, "Do not act rashly, my son, for I am well pleased with this courage of thine. Ask of me a boon!"

"If thou art pleased, O Goddess, then may King Vikramatunga live long and may my wife and children return to life," said Viravara. "So be it," said the voice from above. And immediately the three rose, as if nothing had happened to them. Viravara, delighted, led home his family and then himself returned to the palace gate.

The king tiptoed back to his palace. He cried out from the tower, "Who is on guard at the gate?" Viravara answered, "I, Viravara, am here. I went to find that woman but she vanished like a goddess."

"Surely, this man is unique for his heroism and nobility of character. How can I reward one who secretly saved my life making the greatest possible sacrifice?"

In the morning the king called Viravara to the court and related his wonderful experience to all.

All were surprised. They found no language to praise Viravara. The king made the man his minister and rewarded him with lands, horses, elephants and jewels and asked the court-poet to sing the glory of his deed.

—Retold by D.P.



SETHJI'S PROMISE

Sethji was very sick. He told his doctor, "My sickness is causing me not only physical suffering, but also-mental confusion. I speak things I don't mean and mean things I don't say."

"Don't worry. I'll try my best to cure you," assured the doctor.

"Will you? Thanks a lot. I'll donate one lakh rupees to your hospital," said Sethji.

A long time passed after Sethji was cured. One day the doctor met him and said, "I wanted to remind you that you had promised a donation of one lakh rupees to my hospital when you were sick."

"Had I? That is the thing! I was so sick that I said things I did not mean and did not say what I meant!"





THE CHANGE

On the death of his old father, the young prince, Ajay Verma, was crowned the king.

The old chief minister, Prithvi Singh, had served for many years the late king. With the permission of the new king, Ajay Verma, he went out on a long pilgrimage.

The young king was one day going along the streets of his city when he heard a farmer scolding his son.

"I have made a great mistake by sending you to the school. What an idle boy you have become! The schools are really spoiling our children!" shouted the father.

Back at the palace, King Ajay Verma immediately called a

meeting of all his ministers and declared, "I have seen that the schools are misleading our young children—they are not training them properly. Let all the schools in our kingdom be closed right away!"

"What a wise decision!" said an old minister.

"The king is young but has a clever vision of the future," said another, flatteringly.

And, all the schools closed down the next day.

A few days later, a wealthy merchant came to the court and complained to the king:

"Maharaj, ten days ago a gang of robbers broke into my house and looted all my wealth



and escaped. I informed the police about it. I was assured by the Superintendent that he will catch the robbers and return my money. But, Maharaj, up to now no efforts have been made to catch them. Of what use are these policemen? After all, they are living by our money!"

"Yes, Maharaj, I too have heard many reports about their inefficiency," remarked a young minister.

The king kept quiet for a moment.

"I am convinced of your argument," said the king gravely. "No one should waste public money. Disband the police

force immediately," he ordered.

"Surely, Maharaj, your decision is wise. No other king had ever thought of taking such a step!"

"Maharaj", joined in a senior courtier, "in the last thirty years I have seen our army fighting only once. Are we not wasting our wealth maintaining such a huge and unnecessary army?"

"What a bright idea! Indeed it is' an absolute waste of our wealth. No more army from tomorrow. Send the men back home to their villages. Let them work for themselves and earn their living. They will serve the kingdom better that way!" declared King Ajay Verma.

"We are all very proud of having such a wise king," said the old flatterer.

And so the changes came, one after another, and the king felt very proud of himself. News spread to the neighbouring kingdoms about the strange changes. One day, even Prithvi Singh, the chief minister out on a pilgrimage, came to hear of them. He immediately started on his return journey. As he entered his native kingdom, he was horrified to see the state of affairs.

"Prithvi Singh," said King Ajay Verma when he saw his old chief minister, "you must have heard about the great changes I have brought about in the kingdom. Our kingdom has become most modern!"

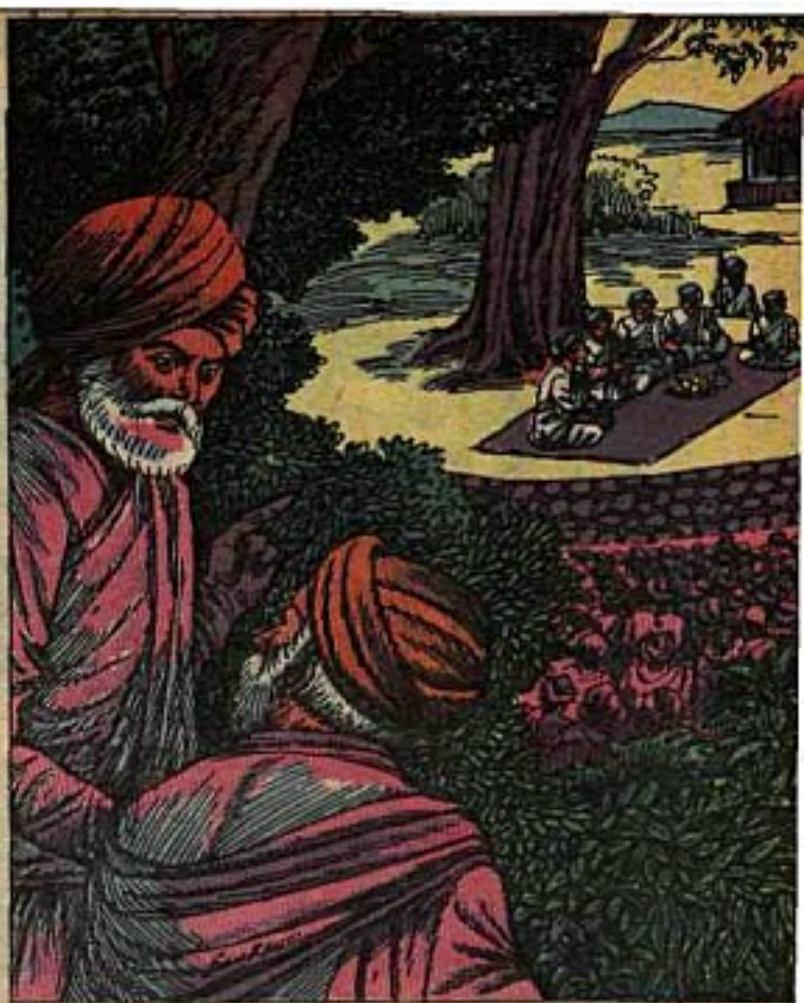
"Maharaj, your decisions are perhaps wise. But, have you tried to know the condition of the kingdom and the people's reactions?" asked Prithvi Singh.

"I am sure they are all happy. That is what my ministers tell me," said the king.

"Maharaj, I suggest that we see the situation for ourselves."

The next day, both the king and the chief minister disguised themselves as merchants and went to a nearby village.

There they saw the village council sitting in a meeting. A member said, "My countrymen, I've already lived a long life of seventy years, but never have I seen such a sorry situation in our kingdom. Children have no schools, girls have no dance and music schools to go to, and no lady is safe any more. Robbers and thieves are moving about in broad daylight, plundering people, as there is no police force to stop them. I do not know how long we can continue like this."



Another person said, "There is now a greater danger. I have come to know from secret sources that the neighbouring king is planning to attack us. We have no army and our kingdom will be swallowed up in no time. We shall all lose the little that we now possess."

"The only thing to do now," said a young man from the crowd, "is to banish the king and to elect a new king to the throne. We shall all revolt against King Ajay Verma and dethrone him!"

And the whole crowd cheered and shouted. "We shall protect our kingdom and our culture."

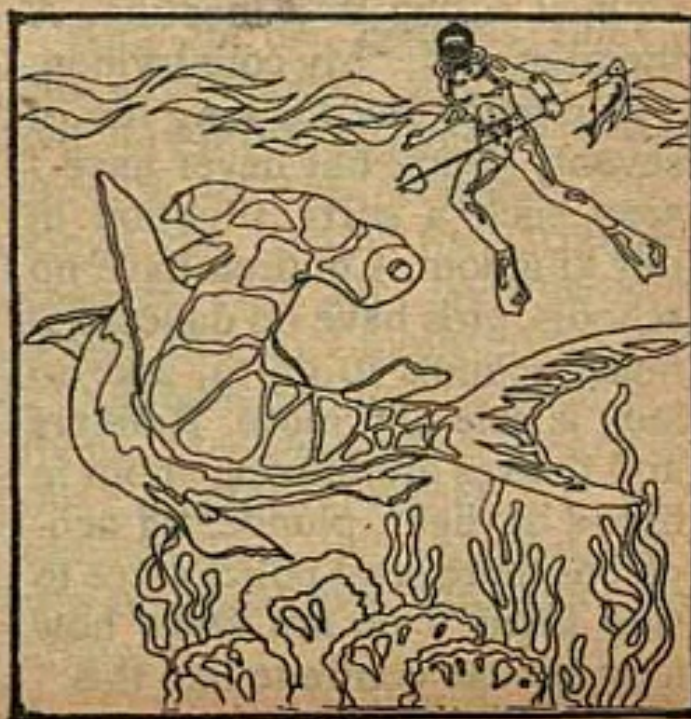


We shall overthrow the king..."

The king realised the great blunders he had committed. The next day he made an announcement re-establishing the old institutions, the police and the army. The people were immensely happy with the re-

turn of the old system and the neighbouring king who was planning to invade the kingdom changed his mind. And the king too dismissed his flatterers who were misleading him and ruled the kingdom with caution and common sense.

WONDER WITH COLOURS



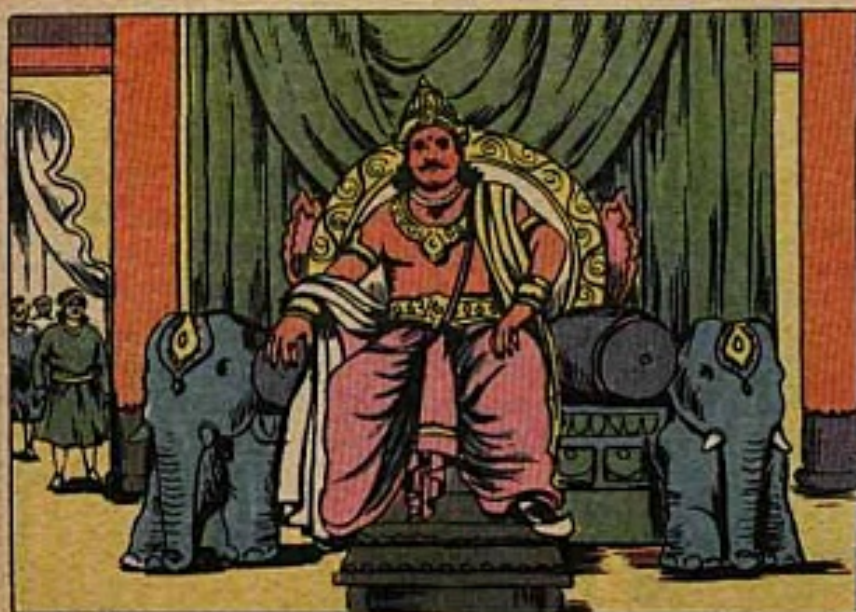


Temples of India

KASHI VISWANATH

Kashi or Varanasi is one of the oldest cities in the world. Kashi means the place of light as well as a place abounding in *Kash* flowers. The city is called Varanasi because it is situated between Varun and Asi, two branches of the Ganga. Ancient legends refer to Varanasi as a sacred city.

Varanasi is sacred because of Lord Siva's presence here. Siva has been here since times immemorial. We do not know who built the first temple to the Lord here. That, of course, does not exist now.

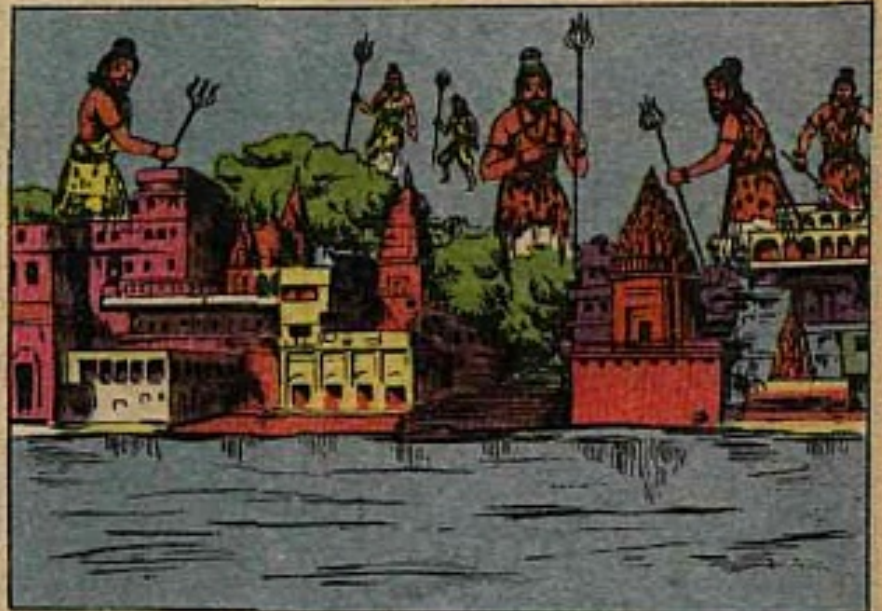


Long ago a king named Dibodas ruled Varanasi. He was a good king and was endowed with many virtues. But he forgot to show due respect to Lord Siva. There was nobody in his court to point out to him his mistake.



The king's negligent attitude displeased Lord Siva. He, of course, did not harm the king in any way, but He left Varanasi quietly. Nobody but his ardent devotees could feel His absence. The king kept busy with his good works.

Some years passed. The Lord grew curious to know how the city fared without Him. He sent some of his spirit servants to observe the situation. Once in the city, they liked it so much that they stayed on along the banks of the Ganga flowing by the city.



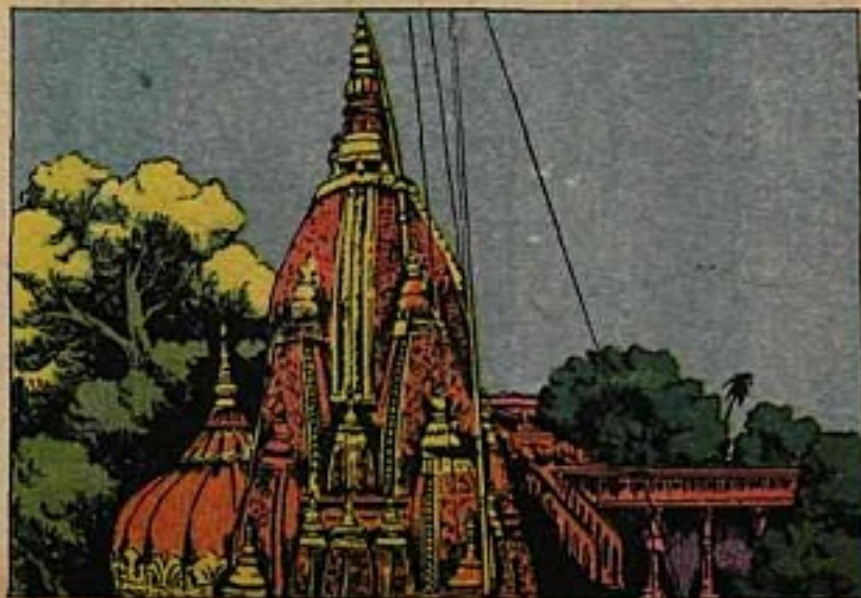
Vishnu, who loved King Dibodas, once met him in the guise of a Brahmin and told him that to be a good man or a good king was not enough. One must seek spiritual enlightenment. Dibodas ought to worship Lord Siva for achieving this end.

King Dibodas woke up to his spiritual duty. He built a grand temple for Lord Siva and invoked His presence there. Pleased with this turn of events, Lord Siva returned to Varanasi. It became a blessed city once again.



Ages have passed since then. The old temple of Siva has disappeared. The temple that is seen today was built by Queen Ahalya Bai, the famous ruler of Indore. The golden cover over the tower was offered by King Ranjit Singh of Punjab.

The Deity, known here as Viswanath or Visweshwar, attracts large number of devotees continuously, from all parts of the country as well as from abroad. The city goes festive on auspicious days connected with Lord Siva.





The ghats on the river Ganga at Varanasi too are crowded, for devotees take it to be a great privilege to bathe in this most sacred river near the seat of Siva. To die at Varanasi is considered a boon. People bring their dead relatives for cremation at Varanasi.

Varanasi is the backdrop for many mythological stories. It was here that the great King Harishchandra had been obliged to work as a guard in the cremation ground when his wife, working as a maid-servant elsewhere, brought their dead son for cremation.



Numerous saints and prophets have visited Varanasi. Among them are Buddha, Shankara, Ramanuja, Kabir, Nanak, Tulsidas and Chaitanya Dev. Though thousands of years old, Varanasi still throbs with life. Its ancient spirit still goes strong.



THE LAZY GROWS BUSY

The father was tired of telling the boy to take up some work. He did not know what to do with his idle son.

Anil loved to stay in bed all day. He got out of it only to take his food or for cleaning himself. No amount of scolding or advice by his parents could change the lazy young man.

The father, Ramdas, had a childhood friend by the name of Chandrasekhar. His only daughter's marriage was fixed with a young man of the town. He needed money and decided to sell a plot of his land.

Chandrasekhar's land was rich, with a big well at its centre. He was confident that he will be able to sell it off any day at a good price. So he did not bother to approach anyone until a month before the date of the

marriage. The prospective buyers, knowing the reason for his selling the land, tried to pressurise him to sell it at a cheap price. But that would have meant a heavy loss for him. Greatly worried, he went to his friend Ramdas for advice.

Ramdas heard the whole story but he kept quiet as he had no solution to offer. Suddenly Anil said from his bed:

"Why don't you offer your land to the zamindar? Your land is adjacent to the zamindar's. He'll be glad to purchase it from you at a good price. Don't you think so?"

"What a wonderful idea! I had not thought of it till now!" said Chandrasekhar and he rushed out of the house.

The zamindar was only glad to purchase Chandrasekhar's



land. He offered a very good price. Chandrasekhar performed his daughter's marriage in a befitting manner.

"Anilkumar is a wise chap, I must say," Chandrasekhar told his friend, Ramdas.

"What nonsense do you speak! He has become my headache. He does practically nothing!" said an irritated Ramdas.

"I think we have to hit upon the right way to set him to work," observed Chandrasekhar.

Next day, Chandrasekhar went to Anilkumar, and waking him from his slumber, said,

"Anil, I hear from everyone around that you are lazy and good-for-nothing. Are you not ashamed of being called so?"

Anil, managing to open his drowsy eyes, replied. "Why care about what people say? I have become immune to their comments."

"But, Anil, I think that you are a very capable boy and that if you work a little you can do wonders!"

"Thank you for the compliment. You are the first one in years to have spoken some good words about me," said Anil.

"I am not trying to flatter you, Anil. Don't you remember the sound advice you gave me before my daughter's marriage? It shows how intelligent you are! You do what I tell you and you'll see the result. Give me just a week's time to put through my plan," pleaded Chandrasekhar. Then he told him what his plan was.

"All right, Uncle. just a week and not more," replied Anil.

The next morning, Chandrasekhar spread a mat on the verandah of Anil's house and asked Anil to sit on it. He then hung a board in front of the house which read, "If you have

a problem, we have its solution: Consult us."

At the beginning passers-by laughed at the board. No one took Anil seriously.

On the sixth day, when Anil was about to remove the board, a shepherd came by and asked, "What is written on this board? Chandrasekhar explained to him about their 'business'.

"Then tell me, Anilbhai, the solution to my problem. It is like this: We are a group of shepherds living beyond the hill. There is a meadow abounding in good grass for our sheep. But the sheep are in constant danger of being lost to the wolves. All of us keep awake at night and keep a continuous watch over our sheep. Still the clever wolves manage to whisk away a sheep every other night. What shall we do?" asked the shepherd in an earnest tone.

"Listen, brother, the solution is very simple," said Anil. "Firstly, instead of all of you keeping awake at night you can take turns, one person guarding the sheep one night and another the next night. This way you can all have your sleep. Secondly, the man on watch should beat a drum continuously. The sound



of the drum will keep the wolf away."

The Shepherd was overjoyed by the solution. The very next day he returned to Anil and paid him a few coins.

Soon word spread about the clever solution Anil had given to the shepherd and villagers began visiting him with their problems. They received just advice from Anil. Anil started getting some money.

One day the zamindar called Anil home and said, "I've heard a great deal about your sound advice to the villagers. I too have a problem. My son has taken to drinking and I have failed in persuading him to give



up his habit. Can you suggest some solution?"

"I suggest that you get some medicine from your physician which, mixed with wine, will make your son unconscious for a while. Once your son regains his consciousness, let the physician himself tell him that he fell unconscious because of the wine which he cannot stand any longer. Let him also threaten your son that if he drinks again, he might lose his life."

That very evening the zamindar acted according to Anil's advice. By morning, he saw the miraculous change in his son—the young man and thrown away

all his bottles and had resolved never to drink again.

The zamindar was so happy that he conveyed the good news to the king.

King Vishal had been sick suffering from a back pain for several months. On receiving the reports of his condition, the king of the neighbouring kingdom suggested that King Vishal should surrender his kingdom to him. His suggestion was accompanied by a threat. Not knowing how to face the imminent danger, King Vishal summoned Anil and told him about his problem. The enemy king was camping in the city. He had a battalion of his best soldiers with him. There was no time to lose!

"Maharaj," said Anil, you'll have to win this war more through the tongue than through strength! Spread word throughout the kingdom that your illness is not true and that it is all a feigning. You are concentrating on secret strategies to attack the neighbouring kingdom. Let your enemy hear that you have purposefully lured them to your capital—to capture them here and to attack their land in their absence. The



plan might work, Maharaj.”

King Vishal's face brightened up. He called his chief minister and told him about it. Soon the necessary rumour was spread. People began to talk in whispers about their clever king's strategy. They looked with contempt at the enemy soldiers camping there.

As expected the enemy king came to know from his spies

about King Vishal's plans! Not prepared to be caught in King Vishal's trap, he left the city, along with his soldiers, under the cover of darkness!

Anilkumar, though very young, became one of the ministers to King Vishal and in course of time he came to be loved and respected by everyone in the kingdom.

An aged man, whom Abraham hospitably invited to his tent, refused to join him in prayer to the one spiritual God. Learning that he was a non-believer, Abraham drove him from his door. That night God appeared to Abraham in a vision and said: "I have borne with that ignorant man for seventy years; could you not have patiently suffered him one night?"

—*The Talmud*

Characters from Indian Classics

ANUSUYA

Sage Atri and his wife Anusuya lived in a hut in the shadow of a mountain cliff. Their hut was surrounded by trees bearing fruits and flowers.

Anusuya was beautiful — so much so that even the birds and animals were never tired of gazing at her. It was not her mere physical beauty which proved so charming, it was the beauty of her nature. She loved all like a mother; her mind was constantly fixed on God. No worldly pleasure had any attraction to her.

"Is it true that she can look upon all as her children?" once the great Gods, Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, were asked by some sages.

"Let us see if she can," the Gods answered. They, of course, knew that she could. But they wanted to prove her greatness for others. They took the form of three grown-up human beings and approached Anusuya when she was alone in her hut and said, "We want to take some rest in your hut, but, you must nurse us while we lie in your lap."

Obviously they wanted to put her to a test. How can a young lady let three strangers lie on her lap?

Anusuya smiled and said, "Come on, my children!" Lo and behold, the three Gods were reduced to three infants. Anusuya held them in her lap, sang to them and breast-fed them!

Deeply impressed by her power, the Gods, when they returned to their original forms, offered her a boon. She wanted all three of them as her true sons. Thus she gave birth to Soma, an emanation of Brahma, Dattatreya, an emanation of Vishnu and Durvasa, an emanation of Siva.

Rama, Sita and Lakshmana met the sage couple when in exile. Anusuya presented to Sita garments and ornaments which were never to be soiled.



MORE ON HORSES

It was evening. Grandpa Chowdhury was sipping tea on the terrace when Rajesh was back from his class.

"Grandpa, I hope you haven't forgotten about the horse—I mean, to tell us more about phrases and proverbs featuring horses!" shouted Rajesh, gasping for breath as he climbed the stairs.

"Hold your horses, please!" said Reena.

"What do you mean?" asked Rajesh.

"I'll tell you. She asks you not to be in such a hurry!" Grandpa answered on Reena's behalf and he continued, "Well, I will come to the subject straight. One of the most common phrases is *A Trojan Horse*. Do you know what it means?"

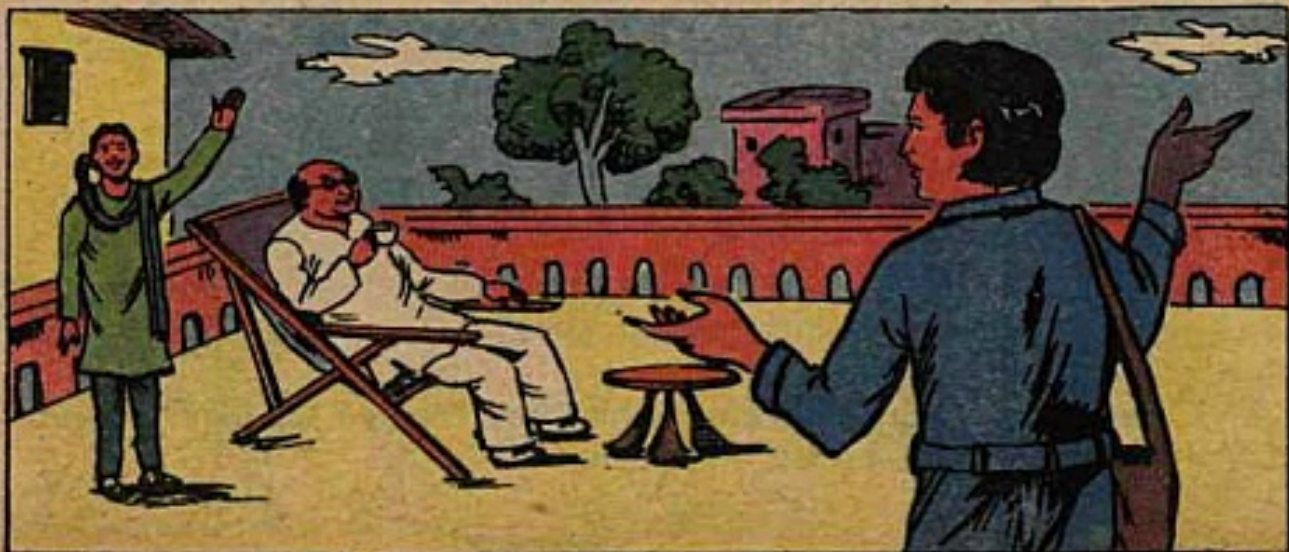
"No, though the phrase is not unfamiliar to me."

"It means a deception or a concealed danger."

"I can link it with the story of the fall of Troy. Those who attacked Troy left a wooden horse and retreated. The Trojans carried the horse into their fort. At night the enemy soldiers hiding inside the wooden horse came out and wrecked havoc on the city," said Rajesh.

"Did the same even give birth to the proverb, *The Wooden horse of Troy*?" asked Reena.

"No, this has nothing to do with the Trojan episode. This means, when you receive something as a gift, do not inquire into its intrinsic value. After all, you have received it without paying for it. Well, there are many more phrases and proverbs with the horse, like *Straight from the horse's mouth*, which means, direct from the highest authority, a report that cannot be questioned. Then there is *Flogging the dead horse*, meaning any attempt at reviving interest in any subject that is out of date," concluded Grandpa.





LET US KNOW

Let me know the names of the "Three Wise Men of the East" who brought gifts to the infant Jesus.

—V. Venkatachalam, Coimbatore

They are *Melchior* which means "King of Light", *Gaspar*, which means "the white one" and *Batthazar* which means "the Lord of treasure". The Cathedral of Cologne is believed to have preserved their relics.

Are the Indian tigers an endangered species?

—Brij Khandelwal, Delhi

Yes. In 1972 their number had gone down to 1,928. Now because of many steps taken to preserve them, the number is around 4,000. In the forest of Sundarbans we have 264 tigers.

What does the word *Kindergarten* mean?

—Sumitra, Jabbalpur

It is a German word meaning a children's garden. Friederich Froebel (1782–1852), a German educationist, founded a school for very young children where learning was made possible through objects of interest, games and songs.

What are X-rays and who discovered it?

—Biswanath Ghosh, Kanpur.

X-ray was discovered on November 8, 1895 by a German professor of physics named Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen (1845–1923). Therefore, it is also known as Röntgen Ray.

X-rays are electromagnetic waves which are capable of going through solid substances except bones and metal.



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PICKS FROM THE WISE

Many of our cares are but a morbid way of looking at our privileges.

—Sir Walter Scott

Dirt is not dirt, but only matter in the wrong place.

—Lord Palmerston

The best way to study human nature is when nobody else is present.

—Tom Masson



TO OUR READERS AND PATRONS

It has been our mission to bring to you as much joy as we can—through stories, legends, mythology and pictures—without causing you any inconvenience. We are always prepared to struggle against odds, but there are times when we cannot continue in the struggle without your co-operation.

In the recent past the cost of production of the magazine has gone up very high while we have stuck to its old price. But now there is no alternative to increasing its price if we have to retain its present volume and quality.

From its November issue, *Chandamama* will cost fifty paise more. Per copy will cost Rs. 2.50 and the annual subscription will be Rs. 30.00.

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The Publisher.

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